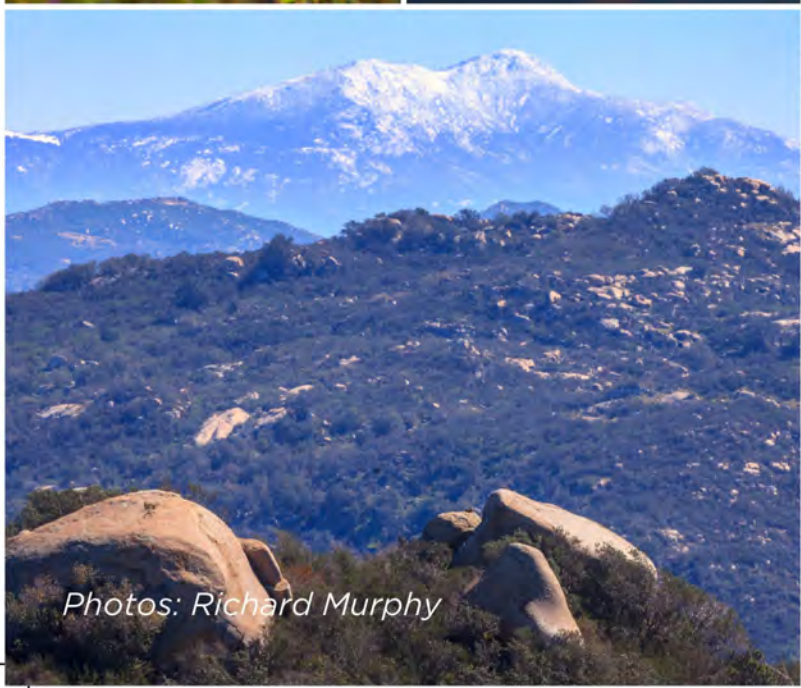
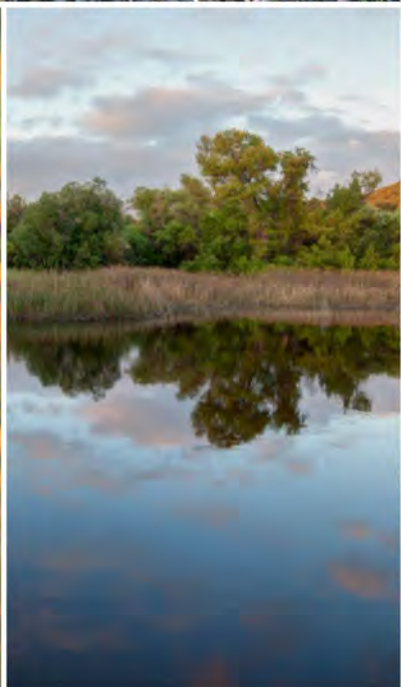


ANNUAL REPORT

2023

Photo: Richard Murphy



Photos: Richard Murphy

Dear Friend,

Over the past two years, our small (but mighty) land trust has held 57* community events where hundreds of volunteers visited our 3,000 acres of preserved lands to tend to the Earth. Staff and volunteers weeded invasive non-native plants; cultivated, nurtured, and planted native plants; hiked while also picking up trash; and lent a hand to the Earth in so many ways.

We worked hard and had fun while doing it.

We saved a new landscape, and added it to the Leomar Preserve, closing escrow on our new Paint Mountain property, and setting it up for success by developing a long-term strategy for its restoration.

Our education team continued to expand our outdoor programs, adding new Tribal partners, and implementing a successful Adventure Camp.

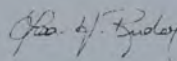
We completed the remodel of our office on the Mountain Meadow Preserve and moved in, creating a home for conservation in North County!

These are just a few highlights and there is much more inside.

Thank you for reading our 2023 Annual Report and following the Conservancy on [Eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com). When you follow us, you will be invited to our events and hikes and be first in line to sign up. We hope you will be inspired to have fun with us while tending to the Earth.

Sincerely,

Lisa Ruder
President



Ann Van Leer
Executive Director



*And that is just the organized events, not counting the number of individual volunteer hours spent on behalf of the Earth in the Escondido Creek watershed. It also doesn't count the much-appreciated random and not-so-random acts of kindness like in 2023 when a group of friends in Hidden Meadows made cushions for the Conservancy office, so volunteers can rest and enjoy the view.



Boulder Outlook, the Conservancy's new office at the Mountain Meadow Preserve.









Thank you party for Hidden Meadows friends who made our office cushions.



Preserve Manager Donna participates in staff snake-handling training.

OPERATIONS ACHIEVEMENTS 2023

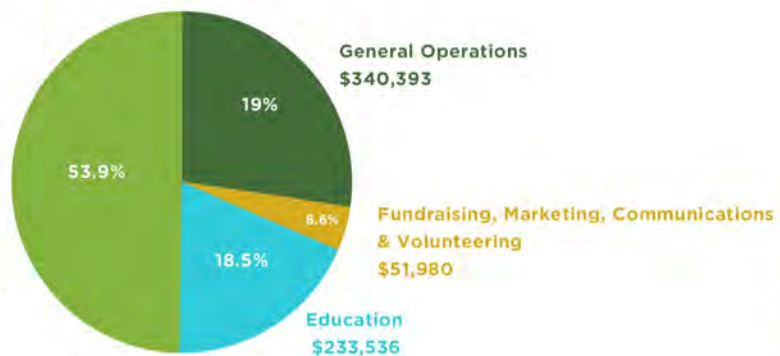
Our Administration and Operations Team works to build and maintain a steady foundation in all aspects of the Conservancy.

-  Moved into Boulder Outlook, the Conservancy's new office at the Mountain Meadow Preserve.
-  Completed another clean audit of Conservancy finances.
-  Launched Connecting Conservation Corridors land preservation campaign to protect three key properties in Elfin Forest, Harmony Grove and San Elijo Hills.
-  Resolved encroachment at Mountain Meadow Preserve, subsequently selling six acres to San Diego County Parks, consolidating ownerships.
-  Hosted over 57 community events in the past two years.
-  Conducted CPR and snake-handling training for all staff.

SNAPSHOT OF EXPENSES 2023

Total
\$1,246,771

Land Stewardship
\$620,852





OUTDOOR EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENTS 2023

Our Education Team works to introduce local youth and adults to nature.



Engaged 1,740 3rd-grade students in our school year outdoor education programming at the Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve, introducing them to the wonders of being outdoors and appreciating nature.



Supported 6 teachers and 435 students while raising Rainbow Trout in their classrooms and releasing them as part of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Trout in the Classroom program.



Provided a 5-day outdoor adventure camp to 52 students attending schools throughout the Escondido Union School District over their summer break.



Expanded educational programming by partnering with 2 new Tribal Partners, reaching 70 students with summer programming.



Kicked off the update for a new 5-Year Strategic Plan for the Education Department.



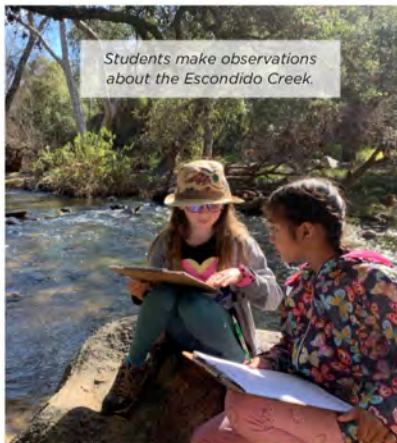
Funded and collaborated with Olivenhain Municipal Water District on the 16th Annual Amateur Photo Contest at the Elfin Forest Recreational Reserve.



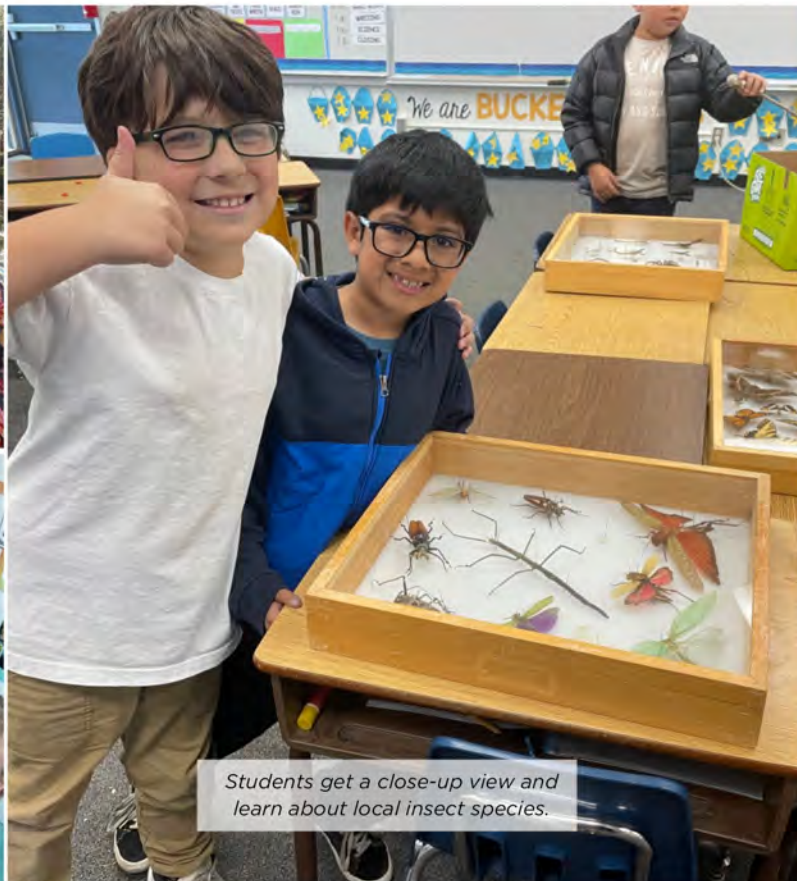
Held 4 Conservation Conversation lectures at the Elfin Forest Interpretive Center.



Increased our collaboration with community partners through outreach events with the Environmental Education Leaders Network, SDG&E, San Diego Children's Discovery Museum, Coastal Roots Farm, and the Rincon Band of San Luiseño Indians.



Students make observations about the Escondido Creek.



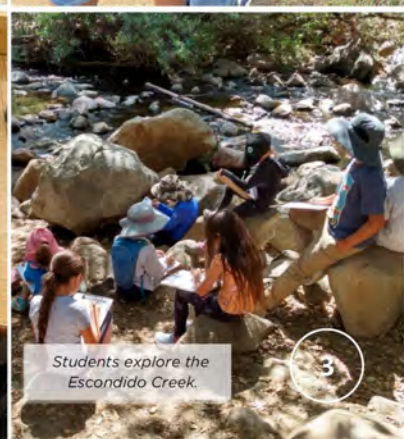
Students get a close-up view and learn about local insect species.



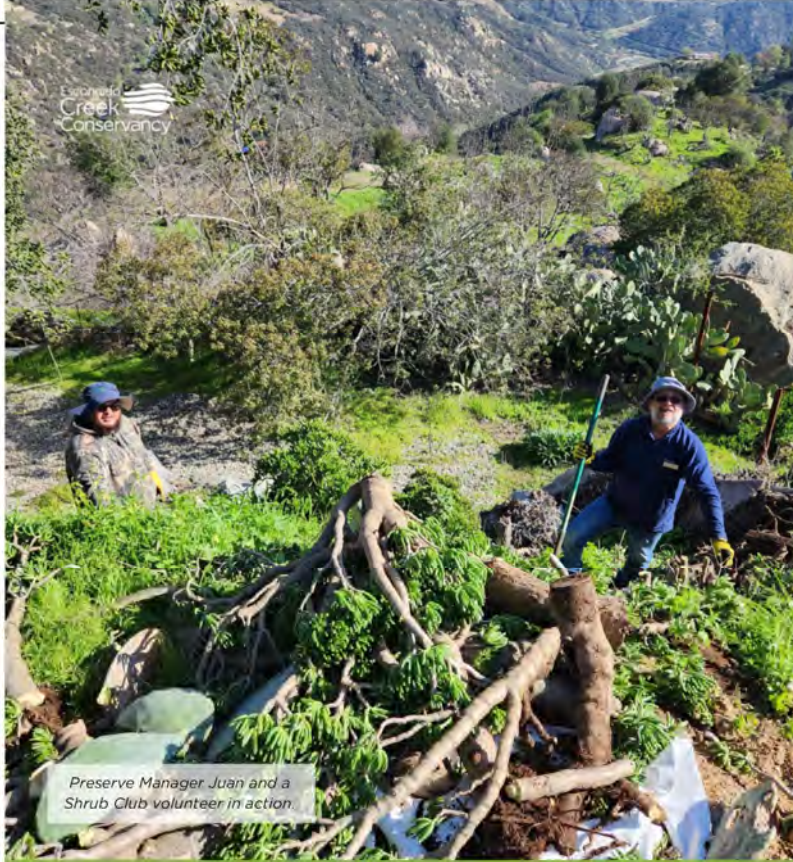
Students use their senses to compare native plants on a hike.



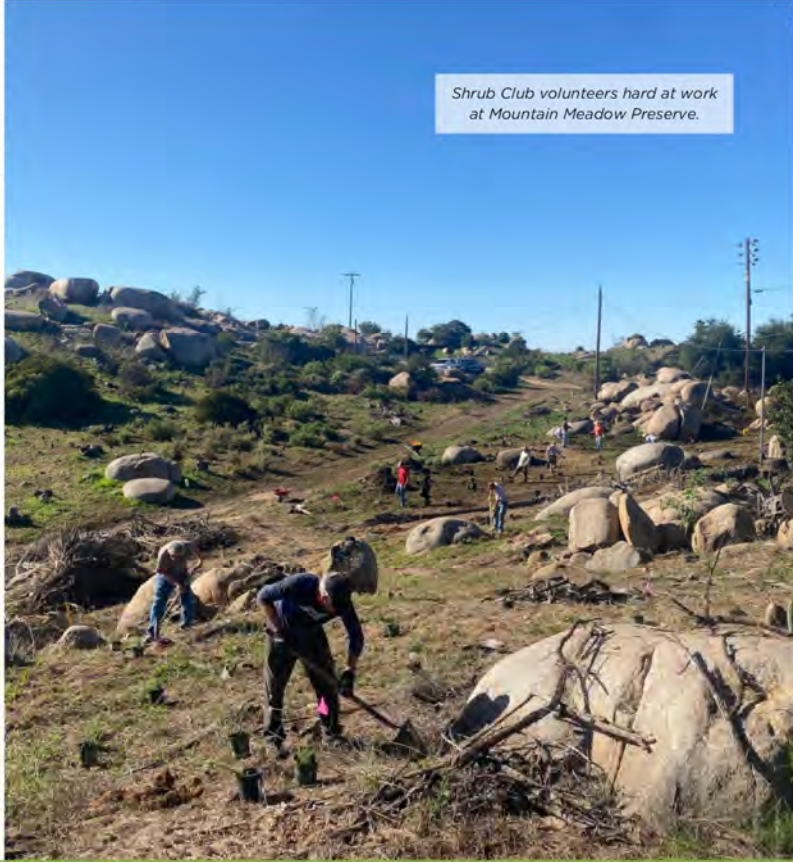
Students study local butterfly species.



Students explore the Escondido Creek.











Preserve Manager Juan and a
Shrub Club volunteer in action.



Shrub Club volunteers hard at work
at Mountain Meadow Preserve.

LAND TEAM ACHIEVEMENTS 2023

Our Land Team works to preserve and restore the Escondido Creek watershed.

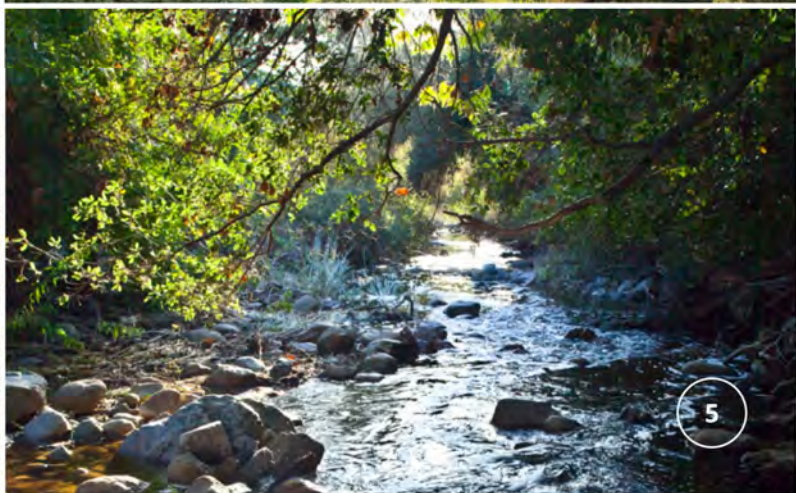
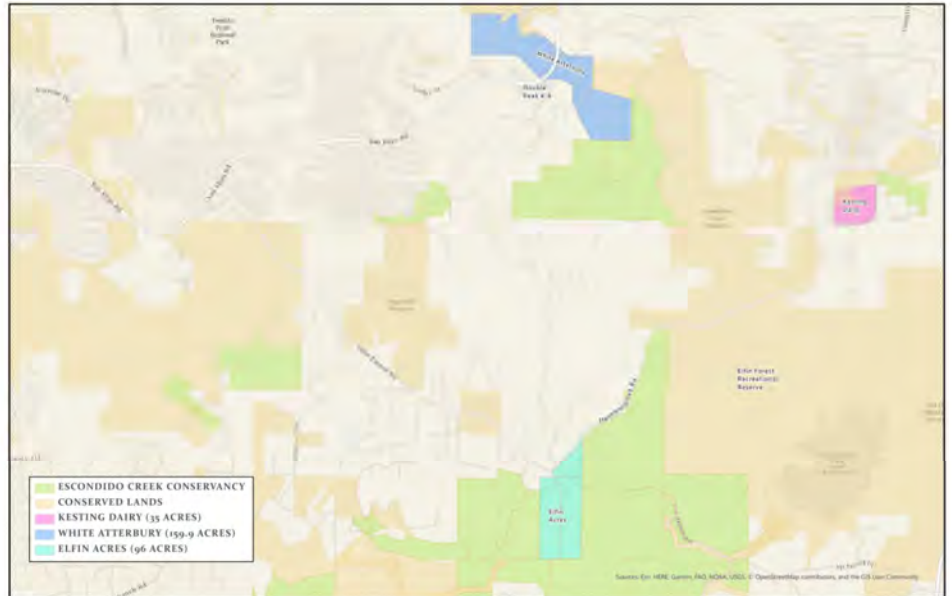
-  Dedicated over 2,000 volunteer hours to land preservation.
-  Closed escrow and successfully onboarded the 48.48-acre Paint Mountain (formerly White-Tate) property, protecting it forever.
-  Increased management of gnatcatcher habitat in the inaugural year of the Gnatcatcher Fund.
-  Volunteers and staff removed over 1,200 lbs of trash from Harmony Grove Road. Collaborated with Olivenhain Municipal Water District (OMWD), Palomar College, and California State University San Marcos to:
 -  Survey more than 900 trees for Goldspotted Oak Borer, an invasive beetle destroying native trees in southern California.
 -  Treat approximately 18 acres of oak woodlands, to help our iconic oaks fight the infestation.
-  Discovered and protected two new populations of the threatened Orcutt's brodiaea plant on Keithley Preserve.
-  Welcomed two new volunteer land stewards to our team.

People and wildlife need the same things — places to find food, safe shelter, a community to find a mate, and a peaceful life to raise their young. Habitat fragmentation due to development is one of the greatest threats to wildlife survival. This extensive loss of wildlife corridors threatens the survival of many species and increases wildlife conflicts with people and pets. That's where you come in!

With your donation to our Land Fund, the Conservancy can connect habitat corridors in North County by saving three key properties — White Atterbury, Elfin Acres, and the Kesting Dairy properties. These properties are for sale and with your help, we can purchase and save them!



SCAN TO DONATE



Photos: Richard Murphy

PLANNING FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW

Endowments provide security and allow for creativity. Endowment funds are invested so the Conservancy can run its programs and operations from the earnings. Your major gift to an endowment helps the Conservancy become more sustainable and grow into the future.

ENDOWMENT GOALS

OPERATIONS FUND - \$8 MILLION

To support highly effective professional management and administration to make certain acquisitions are successful because the land can't save itself.

EDUCATION FUND - \$2 MILLION

To seed the future so we can always deliver outdoor education opportunities to local youth and adults.

LAND FUND - \$4 MILLION

To strategically target lands needing protection and care for lands we manage.

BOULDER OUTLOOK - \$250,000

To erase the debt on our office while creating a fund for maintenance.

ADDITIONAL WAYS TO SUPPORT

VOLUNTEER

BECOME A KEEPER OF THE CREEK MONTHLY DONOR

JOIN THE LAND LEGACY SOCIETY AND REMEMBER THE CONSERVANCY IN YOUR ESTATE

Contact executive@escondidocreek.org for more information on how to donate to an endowment or to answer any additional questions about supporting the Conservancy.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT

SCAN TO DONATE



CONTACT US

information@escondidocreek.org
www.escondidocreek.org
PO Box 460791
Escondido, CA 92046
760.471.9354
EIN: 33-0497525

Escondido
Creek
Conservancy

The logo for Escondido Creek Conservancy, featuring the organization's name in a serif font and a stylized graphic of three horizontal wavy lines representing water or a creek.

Photo: Juan Troncoso